

1938

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UNITED STATES

A 427

20-1-1938

Registry Number A 427/427/45

FROM Commander Ozdes
(Turkish Legation)
No. (Conversation)

Dated 18th Jan: 1938.

Received in Registry } 20th Jan:
1938.

A. United States.

Last Paper.

A 1010169/45-1937

References.

A 644/169/45
(1937)

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

For Admiralty (Plans Divn)

Jan 24

For Angora

No 41 Jan 24.

For Angora Chancery

Feb 22.

(Action completed.)

(Index.)

b3 b5
b2 b7
38 7-38b3
b7
24/2

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A 1860

14013 10/36 F.O.P.

Anglo-Turkish Naval Negotiations.

Record of an interview which Mr Holman had with Commander Ozdes, Turkish Naval Attaché, on January 17th, at which Commander Bell, Plans Division, Admiralty, was present, on the subject of a proposed Anglo-Turkish naval agreement.

(Minutes.)

Mr. Fitzmaurice, }
Eastern Department } to see first.

Copy to Admiralty (Plans Division) and Angora.

Answers

18th January, 1938.

J. B.
10/1/37

See within letter from Angora Chancery
to American Dep. Feb 12.

Q. Inform Chancery, Angora.

The typist who copied
the minute must have
omitted the initials.

J. B.
18/1/37

See 18-2-35

(Action completed.)	(Index.)
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A 427
20 JAN 1938

At my suggestion Commander Ozdes, Turkish Naval Attaché, called on me on January 17th to discuss the question of a future Anglo-Turkish naval agreement. Commander Bell (Plans Division, Admiralty) was present. I reminded Commander Ozdes that at the last meeting with the Turkish delegation at the Foreign Office on January 20th, 1937, the Turkish Ambassador made certain reservations. If agreement could be reached on those questions there seemed to be no reason why we should not conclude a naval agreement at an early date. I proposed to take the points in order.

A647 169 1/3
(a) Overage vessels. (Section C, Article 1, of the London Naval Treaty, 1936).

The interpretation given by the Turkish Ambassador was quite acceptable to the United Kingdom delegation and might conveniently be incorporated in a confidential minute. Commander Ozdes agreed.

(b) Article 19 of the London Naval Treaty, 1936.

The Turkish Ambassador had stated that the Turkish Government did not consider themselves bound by this Article in regard to minor war vessels and auxiliary vessels. As a result of further discussion, however, it had been decided that the reservation of the Turkish Government would only refer to auxiliary vessels. This being the case the Article 19 appearing in the proposed Anglo-Turkish naval agreement would be similar to that in the Anglo-German and Anglo-Soviet naval agreements, which also only provided for exchange of information in respect of minor war vessels.

(c) Light surface vessels, sub-category (a).

I pointed out to Commander Ozdes that the request of the Turkish Government to be allowed to construct two 10,000 ton 8" cruisers during the period of the London Naval Treaty...

Treaty, 1936, would certainly give rise to serious difficulties and I hoped, therefore, that it might be possible for the Turkish Government to reconsider their attitude and accept instead small capital ships within treaty limits. Although His Majesty's Government for their part ~~had~~ no objection to the Turkish Navy constructing ships which were regarded as most suited to their requirements, it must be remembered that if the Turkish Government decided to construct light surface vessels sub-category (a) outside the treaty limits, such action might only lead other Powers to follow suit with the result that the cruiser holiday would disappear. His Majesty's Government were anxious to avoid this contingency at all costs and were for this reason pressing the Turkish Government to ~~make~~ ^{allow} their request to a minimum in order to make the provisions of the proposed Anglo-Turkish naval agreement as acceptable as possible to other Powers. Commander Ozdes recognised the force of this argument but regretted that the Turkish Government were unable to modify their decision to construct two 10,000 ton 8" cruisers. I replied that in that case would it not be possible for the Turkish Government to reduce the tonnage of those ships from 10,000 to 8,000 tons and in this way keep them within treaty limits at any rate in respect of tonnage? Such ships would then be somewhat similar to those being constructed by the Soviet Government, who might thereby be more ready to waive any objection which they might otherwise have entertained. I also enquired whether it might not be arranged that the two proposed vessels, although laid down during the period of the treaty, would not be completed till after its expiration. If this were the case His Majesty's Government might find it easier to induce the

other.....

other interested Powers to accept the Turkish requirements. Commander Ozdes promised to place these considerations before his Government and let us know their views in due course.

I pointed out to the Turkish Naval Attaché that it might be somewhat difficult for the Turkish Government to get the two cruisers constructed in view of the obligations of the signatories of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, Germany and Soviet Russia, not to build vessels outside treaty limits for foreign Powers. Commander Ozdes replied that he thought that it might be possible to arrange for construction either in Dutch or Turkish yards.

In conclusion I referred to the statement made by the Turkish Government at the meeting on January 20th¹⁹³⁷ that Turkey would be willing to waive her right for five years to build any capital ships of more than 25,000 tons. I said that a self-denying ordinance of this kind would be useful to us in approaching other Powers in regard to Turkey's cruiser requirements. Commander Ozdes replied that, if he were to get satisfaction for his Government on the two points connected with the cruisers, it would be preferable not to raise this further issue for the time being. I expressed agreement.

18th January, 1938.

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British Embassy,

ANGORA

(201/1/38)

February 12th, 1938

Dear Department,

Your despatch No.41 (A 427/427/45) of the 24th January regarding the Anglo-Turkish naval negotiations.

The Ambassador would be interested to know who is the author of the unsigned record of a conversation enclosed therein.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY

American Department,

Foreign Office.

OUT FILE

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FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

(A 427/427/45)

22nd February, 1938.

Dear Chancery,

Your letter No. 201/1/38 of the 12th February.

The author of the document you mention was Holman, whose signature was inadvertently omitted during copying.

Yours ever,

AMERICAN DEPARTMENT.

The Chancery,

British Embassy,

Angora.

1938

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A. 1860

10 MAR 1938

UNITED STATES.

Registry Number } A 1860/427/45.

FROM Counsellor to
Turkish Embassy and
Turkish Naval Attaché
(Conversation)

Dated 8th March 1938.

Received in Registry } 10th Mar. 1938

A : United States.

Anglo-Turkish Naval Negotiations.

The Counsellor of the Turkish Embassy and the Turkish Naval Attaché called on Mr. Holman on 8th March and discussed the question of light surface vessels sub-category (a). The Turkish Government found Mr. Holman's previous suggestions unacceptable and made suggestions to which Mr. Holman saw objections. The Turkish Counsellor promised to ascertain from his Government what limits they had in view if the two vessels were not to be completed during the treaty period. In conclusion Mr. Holman enquired whether in any case it would not be possible for the Turkish Government to give an assurance that they would not build any capital ships over 17,500 tons.

Last Paper.

A427

References.

F427

(Print.)

(How disposed of.)

✓ to Comm. Bell, Admiralty
✓ to Angora
no. 117. Mar 17.

(Minutes.)

Copy to Commander Bell, Admiralty, and Angora.

Mr. Fitzmaurice }
Eastern Department } to see.

(9 March 1938, Ankara *)
at Angora should be
forwarded to the Commandant
- see E 188/188/46)

Chancery
9th March, 1938.

J. B.
5/3/38

* Bur Hay has been informed (see distribution above)

Mr. Baggallay }
to see }
D. 188/188/46

Aug 23. 3. 38.

(Action completed.)

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A. 1860

10 MAR 1938

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The Counsellor of the Turkish Embassy, accompanied by Commander Ozdes the Turkish Naval Attaché, called on me yesterday morning to discuss the question of light surface vessels sub-category (a), which was the subject of my previous conversation with the Naval Attaché on January 17th. The Counsellor stated that he had submitted to his Government the suggestions which I had made on that occasion to the effect that the tonnage of the two vessels in question might be reduced from 10,000 to 8,000 tons and that, although laid down during the period of the treaty, they should not be completed until its expiration. His Government, he said, had replied that they were unable to accept a reduction of the tonnage of 8,000 but that they would be quite prepared to delay the completion of the two vessels until after the expiration of the treaty, provided that they had a free hand as regards their tonnage and armament. I pointed out that in that case the vessels, if exceeding 10,000 tons and carrying guns over 8", would become small capital ships. Without knowing what the limit was to be it was quite impossible to give a reply to the Turkish Government's proposal. I added that large vessels in the non-construction zone might give rise to all manner of difficulties and objections. In fact it might in the long run be preferable and more likely of acceptance by the other powers concerned for Turkey to have their two 10,000, 8" gun cruisers and to complete them during the period of the treaty. I requested the Turkish Counsellor to ascertain first from his Government what limits they had in view if the two vessels were not to be completed during the treaty period. He promised to do so.

In conclusion I enquired whether in any case it would not

be/

be possible for the Turkish Government to give an assurance that they would not build any capital ships over 17,500 tons. They had themselves previously proposed a figure of 25,000 tons. Such an assurance would make it easier to obtain the approval of other powers for the construction of their two vessels outside treaty limits.

Answers

9th March, 1938.